

Office of Climate, Water and Weather Services (OCWWS)

## National Catalogue of NWS Products

User Manual

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# Introduction

The Office of Climate, Water, and Weather Services National Catalogue of NWS Products is a web-enabled database system (repository) for entering, searching, displaying and reporting of official and experimental National Weather Service (NWS) Products.

The system is totally web-enabled, all of the necessary functions to use and update the system are available via a web-browser. All of the following functions can be performed without the installation of a program on the user's computer:

1. View lists of products (Official or Experimental)
2. View details – attributes and information on individual products
3. Search for a product based on user specified criteria
4. View a sample of the product itself, or access links to the actual product
5. View reports of products in the database
6. View the Product Description Document associated with a product

The system was developed using PHP scripting language. PHP is a *Server Side* scripting language, which means that all of the 'processing' is done on the server, not the user's computer. Cookies, Java, and Javascript are not used ( for privacy, security and more universal access). *Note: The "standard" NWS web page template is used, and scripting / style sheets may be necessary to use some of the NWS Standard web page items - not part of the database system .*

The following pages provide a description of the user interface and the use of the individual functions, menus, and related features. Please be aware that the figures included may not exactly match the latest version of the Web.

# Access

The system is accessed via your web browser. All of the examples shown, including images, assume that Netscape 4.7 is used, however Internet Explorer and later version of Netscape should work as well.

1. Start your web browser,
2. Type in the following URL: [http:// products.weather.gov](http://products.weather.gov)
3. Press the Enter key.

This will start the Main page, as shown in figure 1. below.

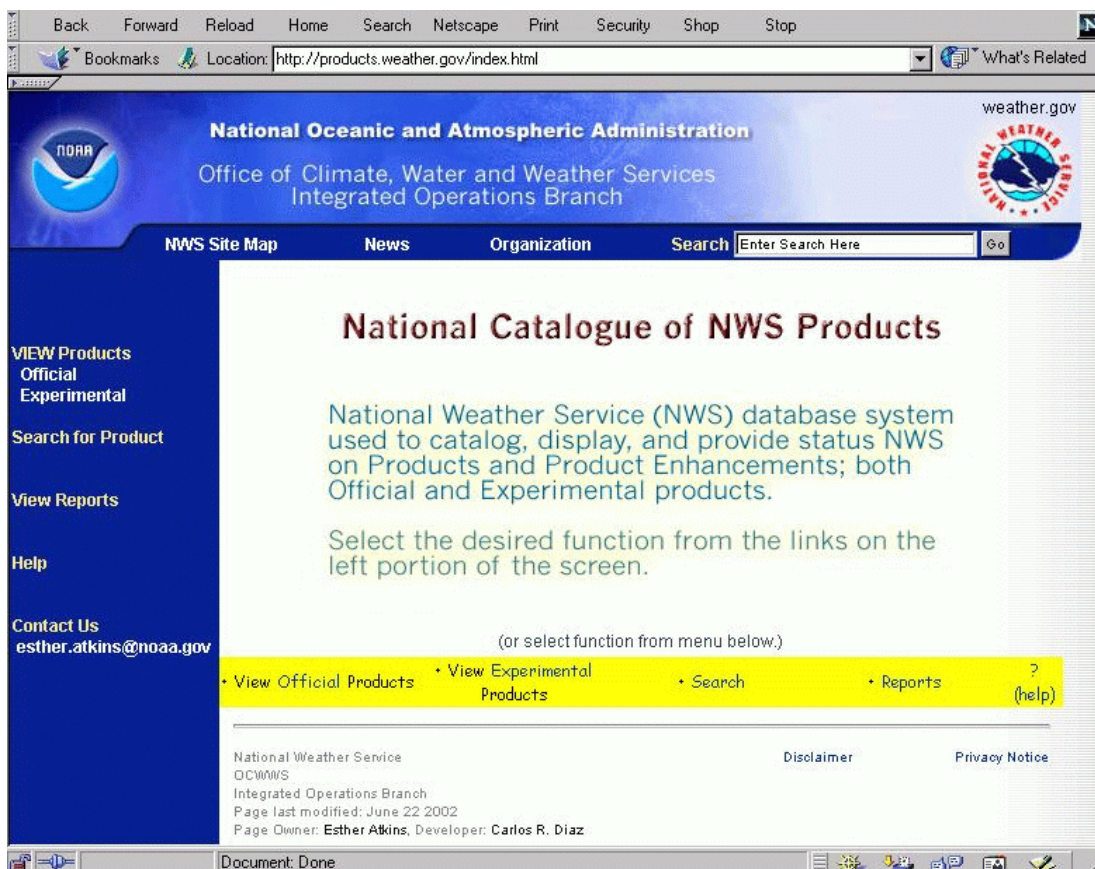


Figure 1. The Main Screen.

For ease of use, most of the screens will have the same menu at the bottom of the page (see figure 2). The Main page differs from the rest in order to adhere to the “NWS Standard” with the options on the left side of the screen.

To use the system, simply place your mouse or pointing device cursor over the desired function and click on the link.



Figure 2. Menu of Functions available.

While using the system, the standard browser keys and functions work as expected. For example, you may set or save bookmarks, use the “Back” or “Print” features, etc. The basic menu functions are:

**View Official or View Experimental Products:** Both types of products are maintained in separate lists, therefore the user should select the link to the product type of interest.

**Search:** Allows users to search for products based on specified criteria.

**Reports:** This function is used to generate various standard reports, for on-screen viewing or printing.

**Main:** This function is used to go to the Main or initial page.

**?:** Help page(s) for the function or menu shown on the screen.

The following sections describe each function in more detail.

# Viewing Products

Official and Experimental<sup>1</sup> products may be viewed by clicking on the **•View Official Products** or the **•View Experimental Products** link.

The View Products modules provide one or more web pages with a listing of all of the products of the type selected. The listing includes the product name, a brief product description, the name of the product sample (if provided), and name of the Product Description Document (PDD), as shown in Figure 3.

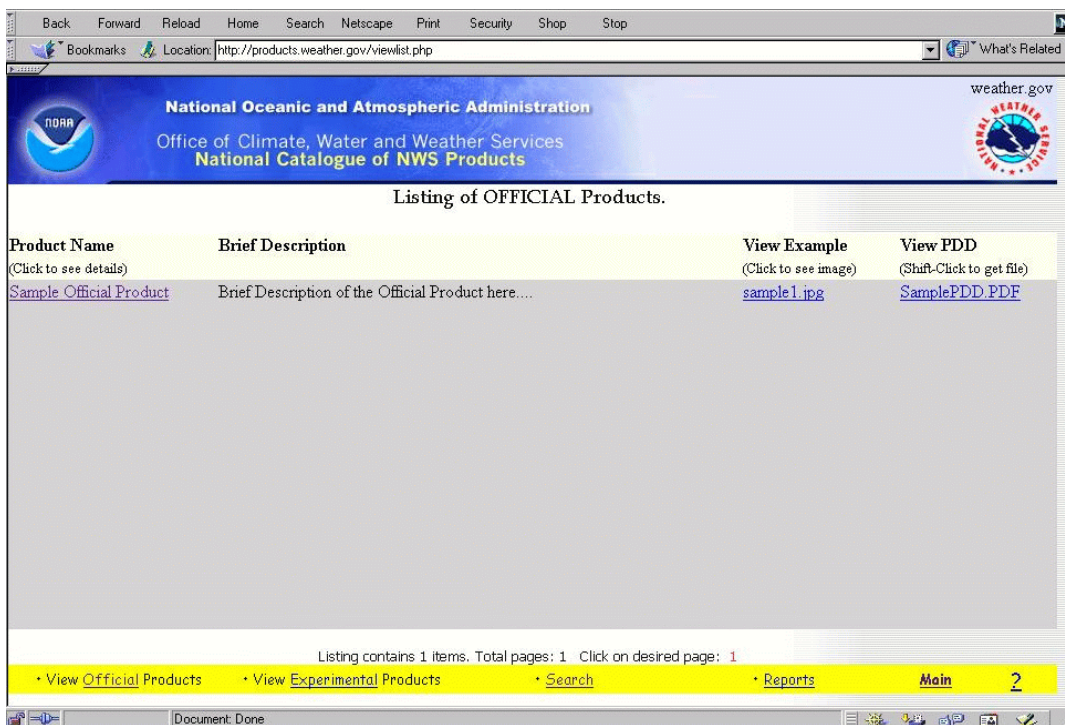


Figure 3. Sample View Products Screen

Notice that the items under Product Name, View Example, and View PDD, are underlined. These are functional links, providing details or files for the associated product.

Clicking on a Product Name will bring up a product details page for additional information associated with that product.

Clicking on a name under the View Example column will bring up an actual image file for that product, if available. Likewise clicking on an PDD file name under the View PDD column will bring up the Product Description Document in Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF), or the WordPerfect file, if available.

Since the list of files may span multiple pages, the bottom of the module, just above the menu provides information on the total number of items and pages retrieved.

When more than one page is available, you may click on the page number to go to a particular page, or you may click on the Prev. Page << or >> Next Page links to navigate back and forth.

Note: Although figure 3 displays a sample list for Official Products, the View Experimental Products screen is identical in function and use.

## Product Details

As stated in the previous section, clicking on the Name of a product in the View Official or View Experimental Products page provides all of the Details associated with that product. The detailed information includes:

**Product Name:** The official name for the product. This may be up to 120 characters long.

**Description:** A brief text description of the product, its use, and other information necessary to convey the uniqueness of that product. This may be up to 255 characters long. *Note: This field is NOT intended to be the full product description as stated in the PDD, but rather a summary statement.*

**Size:** The expected size for the product, in bytes. For products whose size may vary, it is recommended that an average or maximum size be provided. This will help evaluate impact, storage requirements, etc.

**Source:** The source for the data or product. Typically this would be the WFO or Center producing the product. If a unique source exists, it should be stated.

**Originator:** The person or office who originally developed the product and/or is the Point of Contact for information on that product.

**Parameters:** This field should include a list of the sensible weather or other elements used to derive the product, e.g. Max Temperature.

**Example (image File):** The name of the sample image file of the product, if provided, typically a \*.JPG or \*.GIF file. *Note: Most products will contain a link to the actual web-page or location for the products, eliminating the need for a sample image file.*

**PDD Paper:** The name of the Product Description Document (file) for the product. This is typically a PDF or a WordPerfect file.



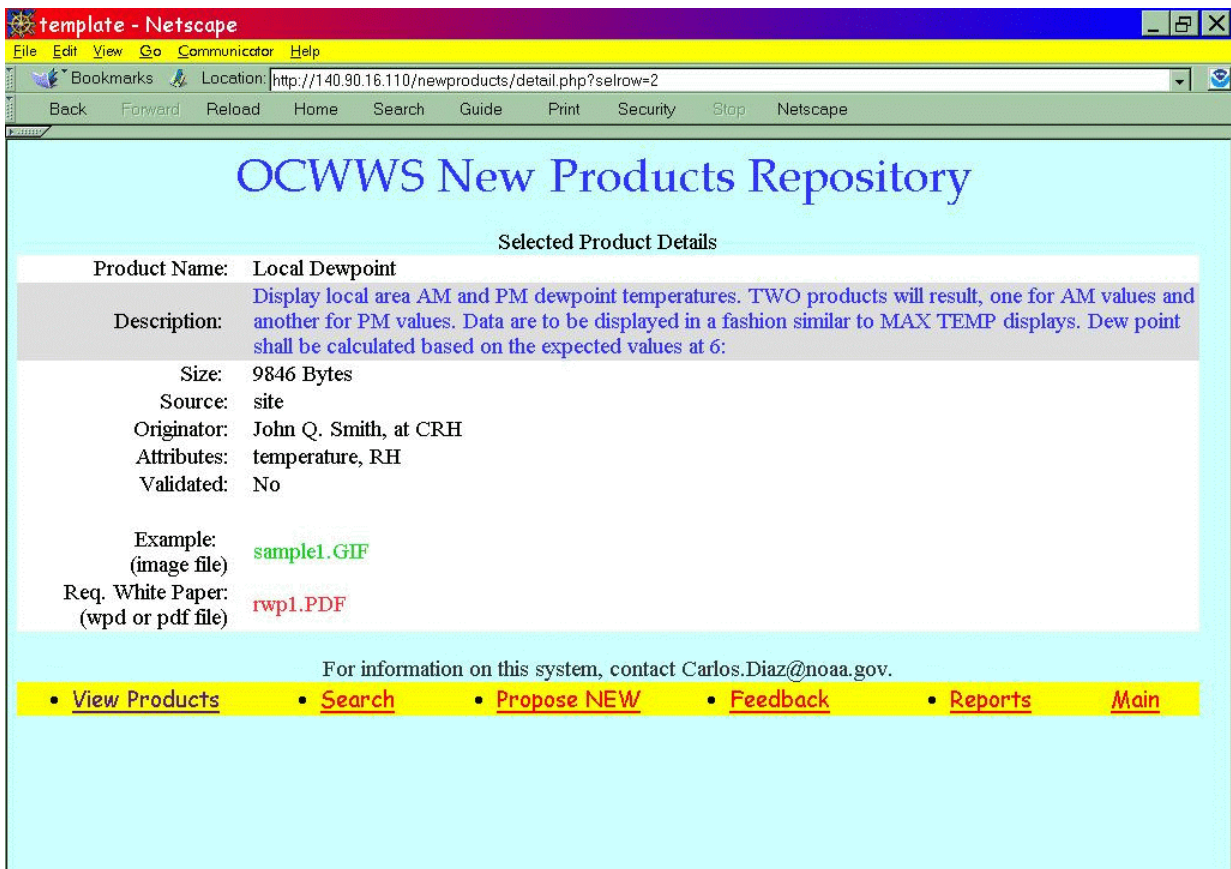


Figure 4. Products Detail page (fictional product).

# Search

You may search the database for Official products or Experimental products. The search function will list all products matching the search criteria.

Searches may be made based on particular criteria specified for Product Name, or text in the Description field, products with a specified Originator, or based on a particular Parameter (sensible weather parameter). The selection is made with a drop-down list under the “Search Field” label.

The search routine automatically assumes wildcards, and is NOT case sensitive. For example, to search for products which contain the word “*humid*” in the product description, select “Description” from the drop-down list, then type in the word *humid* in the input field, then click on the “Begin Search” button. This would list all products containing words like *humid*, *Humidity*, and *humidifier*.

Once the search is complete, a new “report” page with all of the results is displayed.

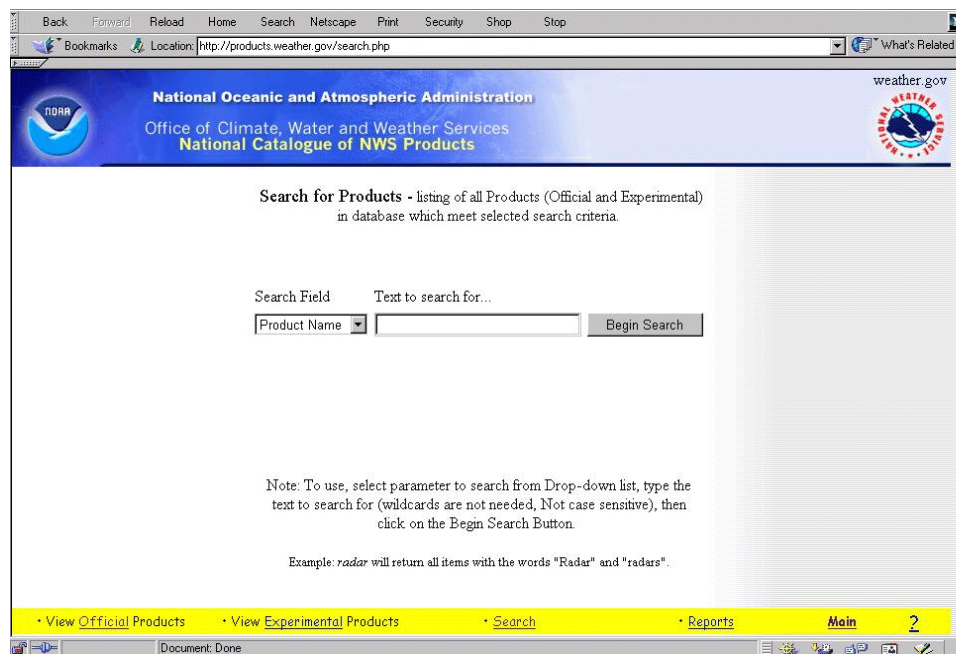
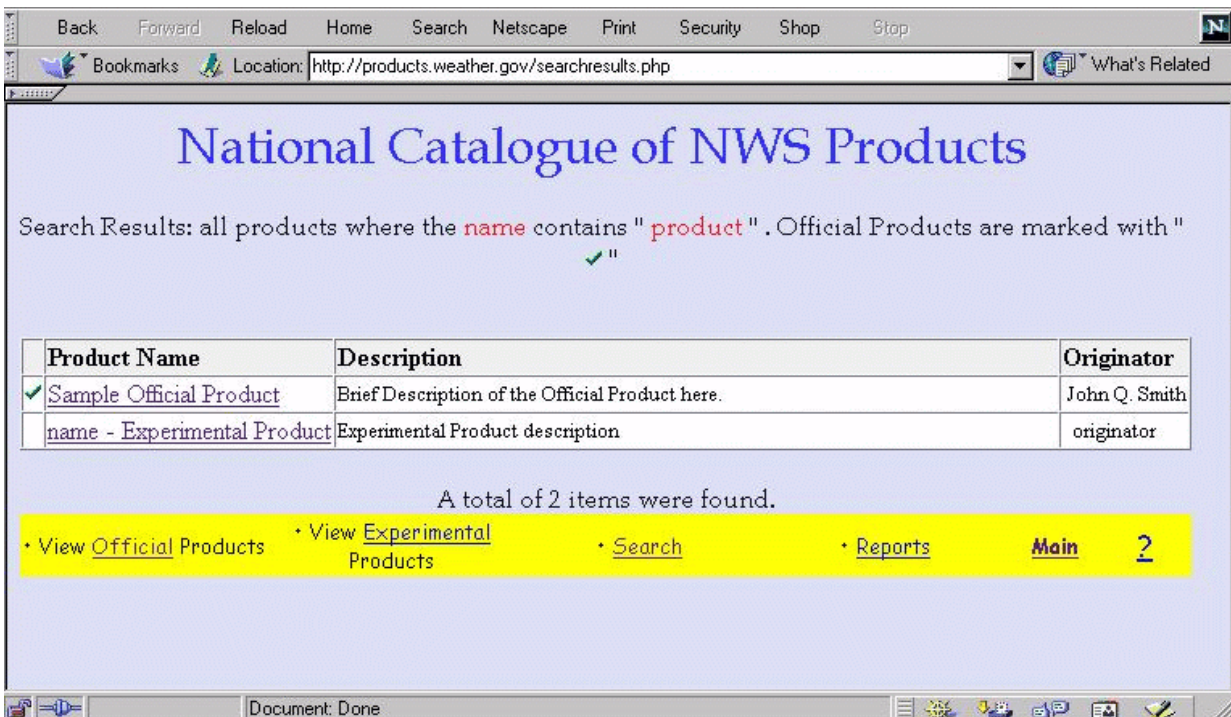


Figure 5. The Search Products screen

Figure 5 in the preceding page shows the search menu. As previously stated, the results are displayed on a new page, whereby all of the products found meeting the search criteria are listed.

The Search Results page indicates the search criteria, lists all of the products found and like other reports in this system, indicates the number of products in the list. You may click on any of the listed product names to see the detail page for that product. Figure 6 shows a sample search report.



The screenshot shows a Netscape browser window with the address bar at <http://products.weather.gov/searchresults.php>. The page title is "National Catalogue of NWS Products". The search results text states: "Search Results: all products where the name contains 'product'. Official Products are marked with '✓'". Below this is a table with three columns: Product Name, Description, and Originator. The table contains two rows: "Sample Official Product" (marked with a checkmark) and "name - Experimental Product". Below the table, it says "A total of 2 items were found." At the bottom, there is a yellow navigation bar with links: "View Official Products", "View Experimental Products", "Search", "Reports", "Main", and a question mark icon.

Product Name	Description	Originator
✓ <a href="#">Sample Official Product</a>	Brief Description of the Official Product here.	John Q. Smith
<a href="#">name - Experimental Product</a>	Experimental Product description	originator

A total of 2 items were found.

• [View Official Products](#) • [View Experimental Products](#) • [Search](#) • [Reports](#) • [Main](#) ?

Figure 6. Sample Search Results Report

# Reports

There are numerous standard reports available. The Reports menu lists the type of reports, which are accessed by clicking on the report type / description.

Each time a report is requested, the system queries the database and provides the latest information available.

All reports are formatted for on-screen viewing. In addition, links are provided so you may go to an individual product and see details for that product.

Reports which span more than one page provide the information one-page at a time, with options to go to the next/previous page or any specific page number.

Reports have a “Printable” version option. Selecting that option provides a text report formatted for standard printer output.

The following report types are available:

- All Official products listed in order of:  
Product Name  
Originator's Name  
Scope
- All Experimental products, listed in order of Product Name
- Listing of Feedback Reports

By default, all reports are listed in ascending alphabetical order.



Figure 7. Reports Selection page.

## General Database Details

There are several data tables used to maintain the data. The following are lists of the main “Data” tables used, and the attributes in each:

Main Data Tables (Official or Experimental Products)			
Attribute	Data Type	Size	Comments
name	Character	120	Product Name
description	Character	255	Product Description
originator	Character	60	Name of Originator
source	Character	60	Product data Source
attributes	Character	120	generic “attributes”
size	integer(6)	Long	Maximum product size
example	Character	90	name of example product file
pddlink	Character	90	Link to viewable PDD document
date1	Date	-	Date product entered in database
date2	Date	-	Date product was Validated
validated	Integer	1	Product Validated (Yes/No)
office	Character	60	Originator’s Office
Address	Character	120	Originator’s address
phone	Character	22	Originator’s Telephone
email	Character	60	Originator’s email address
dataformat	Character	60	Format or type for products data (e.g. ASCII, JPG)
datatype	Character	60	Data type (e.g. text or Graphics)
swreq	Character	90	Name or type of any Required Software
scope	Character	60	National, Local or other scope for product
LocalURL	Character	90	The URL for the product (Originator’s site)
id number	Integer	Long	Unique internal id number

Feedback information Table			
Attribute	Data Type	Size	Comments
name	Character	40	Name of Product
feedback comment	Character	255	
date1	Date	-	Date feedback was sent to database
Submitter's Name	Character	40	
Submitter's email address	Character	40	
id number	Integer	Long	Unique internal id number

## **HELP features**

Most screens have a Help option, depicted with a “?” on the selection menu at the bottom of the screen . Clicking on the question mark will bring-up a help page pertaining to the function or menu currently being displayed. In addition, link to other help sections are provided, as well as the ubiquitous “go back” button.

For detailed help information, see the help pages or the technical section (Nuts and Bolts) in the Administrator’s Addendum to this document.

## **Proposing a Product**

National Weather Service Instruction 10-102, New or Enhanced Products and Services, describes the procedures for implementing new products or changes to products. Approved Product Description Documents (PDD) are to be forwarded to OCWWS via mailbox [NWSRC@noaa.gov](mailto:NWSRC@noaa.gov) per the instruction.

Web enabled forms have been developed for proposing and submitting proposed products, including uploading of the Product Description Document. Since these features are for internal NWS use only, their use, access, URL, etc. is not provided herein. Refer to the Restricted User’s Addendum to this document for details and instruction on proposing products.

## **Sending Feedback**

Web enabled forms have been developed for sending feedback on products listed in the database. Since these features are for internal NWS use only, their use, access, URL, etc. is not provided herein. Refer to the Restricted User’s Addendum to this document for details and instruction on Proposing products.



## Contact Information

For information, comments, or queries on policy, content, or access and use of this system, please contact the Products Catalogue owner, Esther Atkins (W/OS11) at [esther.atkins@noaa.gov](mailto:esther.atkins@noaa.gov)

For information on technical details you may contact the developer, Carlos R. Diaz at [carlos.diaz@noaa.gov](mailto:carlos.diaz@noaa.gov) .